United Nations A/57/L.75

General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
4 March 2003

Original: English

**Fifty-seventh session**
Agenda item 53
**Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly**

**Draft resolution submitted by the President of the General Assembly**

## Amendment to rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and opening date and duration of the general debate

*The General Assembly*,

*Recalling* its resolutions 51/241 of 31 July 1997, 52/232 of 4 June 1998, 53/224 of 7 April 1999, 53/239 of 8 June 1999 and 55/14 of 3 November 2000 concerning, inter alia, the opening date of the regular session of the General Assembly,

*Recalling in particular* paragraph 1 of its resolution 55/14, in which it decided to amend rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to read: "The General Assembly shall meet every year in regular session commencing on the Tuesday following the second Monday in September",

*Also recalling in particular* its resolution 51/241, paragraph 19 of the annex, in which it decided that there should continue to be only one general debate each year, beginning in the third week of September, and paragraph 20 (a) of the annex, in which it decided that the general debate should be organized over a period of two weeks so as to maximize possibilities for inter-ministerial contacts,

*Recalling* that ad hoc arrangements had to be made regarding the duration and dates of the general debate at its fifty-fourth, fifty-fifth and fifty-sixth sessions,

*Recalling also* its decision 56/468 of 1 May 2002, by which it decided to hold an eight-day general debate at its fifty-seventh session, from Thursday, 12 September, to Sunday, 15 September, and from Tuesday, 17 September, to Friday, 20 September 2002,

*Noting* that the advancement of the opening date of the regular session as decided in its resolution 55/14 has resulted in insufficient time to ensure preparedness for the session,

*Concerned* about the impact that the fluctuation of the opening date and the interruption in the course of the general debate has had on its work and on Member States,

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*Strongly convinced* that resetting the opening date of the regular session of the General Assembly and predetermining the dates for the opening and duration of the general debate at future sessions will facilitate the organization of its work, including the work of its Main Committees, and will benefit Member States in their planning,

1. *Decides* to amend rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to read: "The General Assembly shall meet every year in regular session commencing on the Tuesday of the third week in September, counting from the first week that contains at least one working day";

2. *Also decides* that the general debate in the General Assembly shall open on the Tuesday following the opening of the regular session of the General Assembly and shall be held without interruption over a period of nine working days;

3. *Further decides* that the provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 above shall be implemented as from the fifty-eighth regular session; the fifty-eighth regular session shall therefore open on Tuesday, 16 September 2003, and the general debate shall open on Tuesday, 23 September 2003, and end on Friday, 3 October 2003; the fifty-seventh regular session shall therefore close on Monday, 15 September 2003;

4. *Decides* to annex paragraph 2 of the present resolution to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

United Nations A/57/L.76

General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
7 April 2003

Original: English

**Fifty-seventh session**
Agenda item 27
**The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict**

**Angola, Botswana, Portugal, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Turkey and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: draft resolution**

## The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict: breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict as a contribution to prevention and settlement of conflicts.

*The General Assembly*,

*Recognizing* that the trade in conflict diamonds is a matter of serious international concern, which can be directly linked to the fuelling of armed conflict, the activities of rebel movements aimed at undermining or overthrowing legitimate Governments, and the illicit traffic in and proliferation of armaments, especially small arms and light weapons,

*Recognizing also* the devastating impact of conflicts fuelled by the trade in conflict diamonds on the peace, safety and security of people in affected countries and the systematic and gross human rights violations that have been perpetrated in such conflicts,

*Noting* the negative impact of such conflicts on regional stability and the obligations placed upon States by the Charter of the United Nations regarding the maintenance of international peace and security,

*Recognizing*, therefore, that urgent action to curb the trade in conflict diamonds is imperative,

*Recognising also* the positive benefits of the legitimate diamond trade to producing countries, and underlining the need for urgent international action to prevent the problem of conflict diamonds from negatively affecting the trade in legitimate diamonds, which makes a critical contribution to the economies of many of the producing, exporting and importing States, especially developing States,

*Noting* that the vast majority of rough diamonds produced in the world are from legitimate sources,

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*Recalling* all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council related to conflict diamonds and determined to contribute to and support the implementation of the measures provided for in those resolutions,

*Recalling also* Security Council resolution 1459 (2003) of 28 January 2003, in which the Council strongly supported the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, as well as the ongoing process to refine and implement the regime, as a valuable contribution against trafficking in conflict diamonds,

*Recalling further* its resolutions 55/56 of 1 December 2000 and 56/263 of 13 March 2003 in which it called for the development of proposals for a simple and workable international certification scheme for rough diamonds based primarily on national certification schemes and on internationally agreed minimum standards, under the Kimberley Process,

*Believing* that the introduction of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme should substantially reduce the opportunity for conflict diamonds to play a role in fuelling armed conflict and should help to protect the legitimate trade and ensure the effective implementation of the relevant resolutions on trade in conflict diamonds,

*Recalling* the objective of ensuring that the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme should be simple, effective and pragmatic and that it should not impede the present legitimate trade in diamonds or impose an undue burden on Governments or industry, particularly smaller producers, and should not hinder the development of the diamond industry,

*Acknowledging* the important initiatives already taken to address the problem of conflict diamonds, in particular by the Governments of Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea and Sierra Leone and by other key producing, exporting and importing countries, and encouraging those Governments to continue the initiatives,

*Acknowledging also* the continued efforts of regional organizations and other groups of countries to curb conflict diamonds,

*Welcoming* the important contribution made by the diamond industry, in particular the World Diamond Council, as well as civil society, to assist international efforts to stop the trade in conflict diamonds,

*Welcoming also* the voluntary self-regulation initiatives for the diamond industry announced by the World Diamond Council, and recognizing that a system of such voluntary self-regulation will contribute, as described in the Interlaken Declaration of 5 November 2002 on the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for Rough Diamonds,[1] to ensuring the effectiveness of national systems of internal controls for rough diamonds,

*Recognizing* that the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme will be credible only if all participants have established internal systems of control designed to eliminate the presence of conflict diamonds in the chain of producing, exporting and importing rough diamonds within their own territories, while taking into account that differences in production methods and trading practices, as well as differences in institutional controls thereof, may require different approaches to meet minimum standards,

[1] A/57/489, annex 2.

*Welcoming* the important contribution of the Kimberley Process, which was initiated by African diamond producing countries,

*Noting with appreciation* that the Kimberley Process has pursued its deliberations on an inclusive basis, involving concerned stakeholders including those producing, exporting and importing rough diamonds,

*Recognizing* that State sovereignty should be fully respected and the principles of equality, mutual benefits and consensus should be adhered to,

*Welcoming* the Interlaken Declaration, which successfully launched the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the report of the Chair of the Kimberley Process[2] submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/263 of 13 March 2002 and congratulates the Governments, and the representatives of the regional economic integration organizations, the organized diamond industry and civil society participating in the Kimberley Process, on finalizing the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme;

2. *Recognizes* that the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme can help to ensure the effective implementation of relevant resolutions of the Security Council containing sanctions on the trade in conflict diamonds and calls for full implementation of existing Council measures targeting the illicit trade in rough diamonds that play a role in fuelling conflict;

3. *Strongly supports* the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme presented in the form of the document entitled "Kimberley Process Certification Scheme";

4. *Notes* the commitment made at the Kimberley Process ministerial meeting on 5 November 2002 to ensure that measures taken to implement the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for rough diamonds will be consistent with international trade rules;[3]

5. *Welcomes* the decision to implement the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme from 1 January 2003;

6. *Also welcomes* the decision to collate and disseminate relevant statistical data on the production of, and international trade in, rough diamonds as a tool for effective implementation;

7. *Stresses* that the widest possible participation in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme is essential and should be encouraged and facilitated, and urges all Member States to participate actively in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme;

8. *Welcomes* the willingness expressed by the Government of South Africa to chair the Kimberley Process during its first year of implementation;

9. *Requests* the Chair of the Kimberley Process to present to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session a report on its implementation;

10. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the item entitled "The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict".

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[2] A/57/489, annex.

[3] Ibid., annex I, para. 3.